

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the Abstract with the following amended Abstract:

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

~~Disclosed is a projection exposure apparatus by a scan exposure method. The apparatus includes an illuminating means for illuminating a mask transfer region with illumination light for an exposure through an aperture of a variable field stop disposed in a position substantially conjugate to the mask; a driving means for configuring the aperture of the variable field stop in a rectangular shape (having edges orthogonal to a direction of the scan exposure) and simultaneously making variable a width of the rectangular aperture of the stop in a widthwise direction (the scan exposure direction) of the transfer region (pattern forming region) on the mask; and a control means for controlling the driving means to change a width of the rectangular aperture of the variable field stop in interlock with variations in position of the variable field stop of the mask transfer region which varies due to the one-dimensional movements of the mask stage. Also, a projection exposure apparatus includes an exposure mode selector which determines which one of a scan exposure mode and a static exposure mode is to be used for effecting an exposure of each of a plurality of shot regions on a photosensitive substrate by using information on at least one of a layout of the plurality of shot regions on the photosensitive substrate, a required quantity of integrated exposure light on the photosensitive substrate, a form of the shot regions, a degree of resolution required for exposing a pattern image of a mask, and a permissible distortion, so as to instruct the determined exposure mode to an exposure controller.~~ A scanning exposure apparatus includes a masking blade provided between an optical integrator and an optical system, and which is movable in a predetermined direction on a plane perpendicular to an optical axis of the optical system. The masking blade has a pair of edges substantially parallel to each other and perpendicular to the predetermined direction in the plane, and is moved so that the pair of edges are respectively imaged at a beginning and an end of scanning exposure onto a light shielding border by the optical system to change a width of an illuminated region with respect to a scan direction at both the beginning and the end of the scanning exposure.